

Serial No. 09/920,025

Reply to Office Action mailed July 27, 2005

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner update the attorney reference number for this file to "GUADAGNO".

Claims 1-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Satoh (U.S. Patent No. 6,675,197). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as follows.

Satoh discloses a system for initiating a collaborative work support system. The system determines a user's interests using the viewpoint calculation unit (col. 7, lines 57-64). A dynamic communication group generation unit 4 accumulates the viewpoint (interests) of each user (col. 8, lines 1-7).

The communication group is dynamically generated by collecting the users having similar viewpoints (col. 8, lines 7-10).

FIG. 3 is a table showing the viewpoints and email address of various users.

FIG. 4 shows the authority of each of the group members. In other words, does the user have the ability to make changes (control) or merely to communicate.

FIG. 5 is a diagram showing how a user specifies his/her interests. Each of the nodes in window 52 shows a response posted to an initial posting. See FIG. 6. Window 53 is an enlarged view of the shaded area in window 52. Window 54 is used to specify the user's degree of interest in the topics shown highlighted in 52a.

FIG. 8 is a flowchart showing the decision process for determining whether changes to a given work should be displayed to a user based on his/her predefined viewpoint (interests).

FIG. 10 depicts a request to be exchanged among the group members. The request contains the user's id, email address, and viewpoint. The request also contains something termed a group

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member address which is a unique identifier specifying the group. An update message is automatically sent to all of group members associated with the group member address (col. 14, lines 33-37).

FIG. 16 shows how the user communicates with the various group members. Importantly, the user communicates with the group by emailing a message to the server identifying the pertinent group (window 64).

FIG. 17 is a flow diagram of the processing of a request the server. The server extracts the group ID from the header in step S72, extracts the email addresses associated with the group ID in step S73, and distributes a copy of the message area to all of the email addresses in step S74.

Importantly, the users are not communicating directly with one another. Rather, users transmit information to the server which then distributes the message to group member whose interest has been determined view point calculator. See FIG. 17.

It should be appreciated that a posting summary according to the claimed invention is not an email message. The recited posting summary does not contain the content of the posting (which is contained in the dialog posting).

Satoh fails to disclose or suggest, among other things, a posting summary as recited by the claimed invention. As recited in each of the independent claims, the posting summary contains addressing information identifying recipients of the corresponding dialog posting, the posting identifier, the dialog identifier, referential information defining the relationship of the posting summary to other posting summaries in the dialog, and content description information.

Satoh does not have a construct which any way anticipates or renders obvious the recited posting summary. A request according to Satoh does not have the addressing information identifying

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the recipients of the request. Rather such addressing information is retrieved by the server using the group ID. Notably Satoh teaches:

First, when an electronic mail is received from the client system 10, the mail distribution device 24 divides the mail into the header area and message area (step S71). Next, the header area divided from the mail is analyzed and the group ID is extracted from the title column (step S72). The extracted group ID is transferred to the group information storage device 27 and the mail addresses of the group member corresponding to the group ID are all returned (step S73). Next, the mail distribution device 24 registers these mail addresses to destination and generates a new electronic mail by combining the divided message area (step S74). This newly generated mail is transferred depending on the electronic mail transfer protocol to distribute the mail to the group members (step S75). Col 17, lines 32-47.

A request according to Satoh does not contain referential information defining the relationship of the request (posting summary) to other requests (posting summaries) in the dialog. Moreover, a request according to Satoh does not contain content description information. For that matter, Satoh fails to disclose or suggest the use of the recited posting identifier which uniquely identifying the dialog posting.

As described on pages 18-19 of Applicants' disclosure [t]he addressing information contained in each posting summary provides a record of the intended direct (to) and indirect (cc) posting audience. The set of users extracted from each addressing information section of each posting summary contained in a path makes up what is referred to as a Path Ad-Hoc Interest Group and is used by the dialog facilitation system to control access and sharing requests.

The dialog facilitation system uses a distributed storage model in which the dialog construct (posting summary), which preserves the temporal and contextual characteristics of the postings, is stored by the dialog facilitation system in the dialog store (storage area) 100-1, and the posting

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content is stored by the conventional messaging system 104 in a mail folder 104-6 within the content store 104-4. See, FIGs. 1, 1A, 1B, and 14. In other words, the posting summary is a distinct entity from the posting content.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-32 in view of Satoh be reconsidered and withdrawn.

As to claim 2, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion. Satoh fails to disclose or suggest a posting summary feature as recited in the independent claims, and correspondingly fails to disclose or suggest the recite journal keeper which updates the referential information of relating posting summaries.

The Office Action cites col. 18, lines 11-26 and col. 24, lines 37-56 for support. However, the referenced portions are inapposite.

In col. 18, lines 11-16 Satoh teaches that the interpretation device interprets requests and transfers the request, depending on its content to similarity calculation unit, user info storage device or permanent communication session control device. None of which is relevant to the recited journal keeper or posting summary features of the claimed invention.

In col. 18, lines 17-26 Satoh teaches that when the interpretation device 71 interprets a request for permanent holding of the communication session, the control device 72 freezes the group members (which may dynamically change depending on a users signaling interest or disinterest). Correspondingly, if the interpretation device 71 interprets a request for cancellation of a permanent request then the group member list is unfrozen. Again, none of this is relevant to the recited journal keeper or posting summary features of the claimed invention.

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In col. 24, lines 37-56 Satoh teaches that the work area detection unit automatically detects the work area of the user. None of this is relevant to the recited journal keeper or posting summary features of the claimed invention.

For these additional reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 2 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

As to claim 3, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion. Satoh fails to disclose or suggest a posting summary feature as recited in the independent claims, and correspondingly fails to disclose or suggest the recited media coordinator which, inter alia, displays the content description information of posting summaries.

The Office Action cites col. 11, lines 11-44 for support. However, the referenced portions are inapposite. Notably, in col. 11, lines 11-44 Satoh teaches

FIG. 5 illustrates an example of the system manipulation display image. In the client system 10, the system manipulation display image 50 illustrated is provided to users by the WWW browser 13. This manipulation display image 50 includes the URL input image 51 with which a user can request information to the common information database 30, the common information display image 52 with which a user can designate the work area 52a to the common information or can executes the edition work, the work area display image 53 for displaying the work area 52a designated or edited by user in the common information display image 52, the grouping condition input image 54 for inputting the condition requested by user at the time of generating the communication group and the session information display image 55 for displaying information about the generated communication session. In the work area display image 53, the scroll bars 53a, 53b for adjusting and moving the work area are prepared. Here, the grouping condition input image 54 corresponds to the image provided by the grouping condition registration unit 4c of FIG. 1.

First, a user inputs the URL of the information to be obtained to the WWW browser 13 from the URL input image 51. The input URL is transferred to the common information database 30 via the WWW browser 13 and

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communication device 16. The communication device 31 of the common information database 30 transfers, in turn, the transferred URL to the common information storage device 32 and the common information storage device 32 extracts the relevant information to return to the client system 10 via the network 40 from the communication device 31. The returned information is entirely displayed as the over view on the common information display image 52 by the WWW browser 13 of the client system 10.

There is no mention of anything even arguably analogous to the recited posting summaries displayed by the media coordinator of the claimed invention. Rather, FIG. 5 of Satoh merely depicts a display which retrieves common information (*not* posting summaries), allows the user to designate some of the information using the job condition which in turn causes the system to assemble group members sharing the same affinity. Satoh does not disclose or suggest the recited construct which enables users to navigate between dialogs and postings belonging to a given dialog, displays the content description information of a selected posting summary, and selectively retrieves a dialog posting responsive to a user command and displays the associated posting detail information.

For these additional reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 3, 14 and 24 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

As to claims 7 and 8, Applicants respectfully asserts that the cited portions of Satoh are inapposite.

Claim 7 recites, inter alia, a feature where the interface prompts the user to provide a list of recipients for a given posting. Satoh not only fails to disclose or suggest such a feature but would appear to teach away from this feature of the invention. Notably, in a device according to Satoh, users NEVER specify recipients. Rather, the SYSTEM picks recipients according to their specified affinity (Job Condition). Nowhere in Satoh's disclosure is there any suggestion that the user has any

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ability to specify intended recipients. In fact, users do not direct communications to other users; rather, all communications are addressed to the server and the server picks the users based on their stated affinity.

As described in col. 8, lines 7-9: "Thereby, the communication group can be generated dynamically by collecting the users having the similar viewpoints for the user viewpoint information calculated by the user viewpoint calculation unit 3."

For this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 7 and 8 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

As to claim 10, Applicants respectfully asserts that the cited portions of Satoh are inapposite. Satoh never discloses forwarding anything, nor does Satoh disclose specifying a list of recipients. As described above, communications in a system according to Satoh are forwarded to an automatically identified affinity group. Users never specify intended recipients rather the System sends communications to all of the affinity group.

For this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 10 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 11-32 be reconsidered and withdrawn in view of the reasons provided in traversing the rejection of claim 1, and further in view of the additional reasons provided in traversing the rejection of claims 2, 3, 7, 8 and 10.

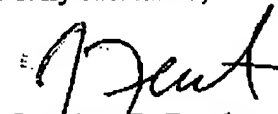
It is believed that the above Remarks represent a complete response to the Office Action and that the Application is now in condition for allowance, and such favorable determination is requested.

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If any questions regarding this Application should arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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